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Soldiers prepare vehicles, minds before going on missions

Story and Photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes
2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, prepare their vehicles and minds daily before going out on missions.

“Every morning we make sure we know exactly the status of our vehicles,” said Sgt. Donovan Edmond, command driver, HHC, STB, 2nd BCT. “We also make sure every Soldier is 100 percent mission capable.”

After conducting physical training, Soldiers visit the motor pool to start their preventive maintenance checks and services on their vehicles. They use Training Manual-10 as a guide to ensure the vehicle is inspected thoroughly.

After vehicles are inspected, Soldiers participate in refresher courses with subjects such as: Force Battle Command Brigade and Below system, Combat Lifesaver Course, night driving, Counter Remote Electronic Warfare systems and Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio system.

One of the systems Soldiers from HHC, STB, 2nd BCT try to become proficient at is the FBCB2 system.

During the FBCB2 refresher course, Soldiers learn to properly initiate the system, upload and change graphics on maps and make and send quick messages. Edmond said, “If we were to call in a medical evacuation with the FBCB2, we would just hit a button and the nine-line medevac would come up.”

Using the quick messages learned in the refresher course makes it faster to call in a medevac, possibly saving lives.

“These refresher courses help us retain knowledge for greater leadership responsibilities,” said Sgt. Chervaldrick Williams, command driver, HHC, STB, 2nd BCT.

After Soldiers participate in the refresher courses, they perform pre-combat checks and inspections before exiting the gates of Kalsu for a mission.

All vehicles go through inspections again for any leaks or problems and Soldiers are checked by their team leaders to ensure they have proper ammunition loads, clean weapons, earplugs, gloves, eye protection, water and all other equipment necessary to complete the mission.

Once missions are completed, Soldiers perform an after-PMCS, top off fluids in the vehicles, perform sensitive equipment inventories, clean the inside and outside of the vehicle and gather for an after action review to discuss goals that were met throughout the day and improvement needed.

Edmond concluded, “taking the time to prepare before a mission and continuing to learn makes us better Soldiers in the long-run.”



Refresher.

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Sgt. Brandon Jackson (center), Sgt. Donovan Edmond (far left) and Sgt. Chervaldric Williams, command drivers, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, take a Force Battle Command Brigade and Below system refresher course before going on a patrol Wednesday.

(U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes, 2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



Training.

FOB KALSU, Iraq -- Sgt. Chervaldric Williams (right) teaches Pfc. Robin Bodin, both from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, how to properly pull 360 degree security if hit with small arms fire during a patrol Wednesday.

(U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes, 2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)